

January 7, 2008

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

TO ALL INTERESTED GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND PUBLIC GROUPS:

In accordance with the regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality at 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 1500, and the implementing procedures at 40 CFR Part 6 entitled “Procedures for Implementing the Requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality on the National Environmental Policy Act”, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has determined that the following action is eligible for a Categorical Exclusion (CE) and exemption from further environmental review.

Drinking Water Infrastructure Rehabilitation/Construction Project
for the
Town of Slaughter, East Feliciana Parish, Louisiana

EPA Project Number: XP-966489-01

Estimated Total EPA Share: \$ 192,400
Estimated Local Share: \$ 657,419

BACKGROUND

The Town of Slaughter (Town) is located in East Feliciana Parish, which is situated in the north central portion of the state approximately 20 miles north of Baton Rouge. The Town was selected to receive Fiscal Year 2005 special Congressional funding support for functional replacement of the Town’s North drinking water supply well at the existing location, which is along State Highway 16 near the center of the Town. Upon replacement and once the new North well becomes operational, the Town’s existing North well will be closed and the existing South well will be used as a reserve well. The Town is experiencing capacity and water quality problems associated with the North well, since the equipment at that location is almost 50 years old and has far exceeded its mechanical life expectancy. The funding recipient will use the EPA funds along with local monies to finance the proposed rehabilitation and construction project. The funding recipient has requested that the project be granted a Categorical Exclusion, and be excluded from the full environmental review and assessment requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Town has decided to proceed with the project in an effort to provide a safe and reliable method of providing increased drinking water supply capacity and improved water

quality to the local citizens. The project to replace the North well will involve the following rehabilitation and minor construction activities:

1. Development of engineering, surveying, and plans and specifications;
2. Drill new well with a capacity of 750 gallons per minute;
3. Install new piping, pumps, and operational appurtenances; and
4. Close the existing North well.

All project related rehabilitation and construction activities will occur in previously disturbed areas on-site at the existing North well, which is owned or controlled by the funding recipient. No new land will be acquired, and no persons or businesses will be displaced by the rehabilitation and construction activities. The project will not cause an expansion of the Town's existing drinking water supply/service area.

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

The proposed project qualifies for a CE. The project is a small-scale, routine action solely directed toward minor rehabilitation of an existing facility and functional replacement of existing equipment. The proposed action will not individually, cumulatively over time, or in conjunction with any other federal, state, local, or private actions have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment and may be exempted from environmental review under NEPA. No adverse direct, indirect, or cumulative effects on cultural resources, endangered and threatened species and their critical habitat, floodplain, wetlands, prime farmlands or aquifer recharge zones were identified. There are no Environmental Justice concerns with the proposed project since all residents in the area will benefit equally from the infrastructure improvements.

APPROVAL

_____The request for the issuance of a CE is approved. This approval will be revoked if at any time the project no longer meets the eligibility for a CE, new evidence determines that significant local or environmental issues exist, or that federal, state, local or tribal laws are being or may be violated by implementation of the project.

Responsible Official,

John Blevins
Director
Compliance Assurance and
Enforcement Division

cc: Bobbie Bourgeois, Mayor
City of Slaughter

Dr. Roxane Townsend, Secretary
Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals